JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAIʻI
KE KIAʻĀINA O KA MOKUʻĀINA ʻO HAWAIʻI

DEPT. COMM. NO. 274

KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., M.P.H., M.G.A.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HOʻOKELE

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA ʻOIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

January 05, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura,
Speaker
and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the Annual Report on the Receipt and Expenditures from the Emergency Medical Services Special Fund to the Legislature, pursuant to Chapter 321, Section 234, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at:

https://health.hawaii.gov/opppd/department-of-health-reports-to-2026-legislature/

Sincerely,

Kenneth S. Fink, M.D., M.P.H., M.G.A.
Director of Health

Enclosures

c: Legislative Reference Bureau
Hawaii State Library System (2)
Hamilton Library

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
STATE OF HAWAII
2026

PURSUANT TO SECTION 321-234 (d), HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE RECEIPT AND EXPENDITURES FROM THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SPECIAL FUND

PREPARED BY:
STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

December 2025

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 321-234 (d), HAWAII REVISED STATUTES,
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SPECIAL FUND

The emergency medical services special fund (EMS special fund), established in section 321-234, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) was created by Act 158, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2004, to provide funds for operation of an enhanced and expanded state comprehensive emergency medical services system. The statutory language is as follows:

§321-234 Emergency medical services special fund. (a) There is established within the state treasury a special fund to be known as the emergency medical services special fund to be administered and expended by the department.

(b) The moneys in the special fund shall be used by the department for operating a state comprehensive emergency medical services system including enhanced and expanded services, and shall not be used to supplant funding for emergency medical services authorized prior to [July 1, 2004].

(c) Fees remitted pursuant to section 249-31, cigarette tax revenues designated under section 245-15, interest and investment earnings attributable to the moneys in the special fund, legislative appropriations, and grants, donations, and contributions from private or public sources for the purposes of the fund, shall be deposited into the special fund.

(d) The department shall submit an annual report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session that outlines the receipts of, and expenditures from, the special fund.

The statutory language for section 249-31, HRS, is as follows:

§249-31 State registration fee. (a) All vehicles and motor vehicles in the State as defined in section 249-1, including antique motor vehicles, except as otherwise provided in sections 249-4, 249-6, and 249-31.5, shall be subject to a $45 annual vehicle registration fee. The fee shall be paid each year together with all other taxes and fees levied by this chapter on a staggered basis as established by each county as authorized by section 286-51, and the state registration for that county shall likewise be staggered so that the state registration fee is due and payable at the same time and shall be collected together with the county fee. The state registration fee shall be deemed delinquent if not paid with the county registration fee. The respective counties shall collect this fee together with the vehicle registration tax collected for the county and shall transfer the moneys collected under this section to the State.

(b) From each annual motor vehicle registration fee, the director shall deposit $40 into the state highway fund and $5 into the emergency medical services special fund.

The statutory language for section 245-15, HRS is as follows:

> §245-15 Disposition of revenues. All moneys collected pursuant to this chapter shall be paid into the state treasury as state realizations to be kept and accounted for as provided by law; provided that, of the moneys collected under the tax imposed pursuant to:
>
> (1) Section 245-3(a)(5), after September 30, 2006, and prior to October 1, 2007, 1.0 cent per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;
>
> (2) Section 245-3(a)(6), after September 30, 2007, and prior to October 1, 2008:
>
> (A) 1.5 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;
>
> (B) 0.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the trauma system special fund established pursuant to section 321-22.5; and
>
> (C) 0.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the emergency medical services special fund established pursuant to section 321-234;
>
> (3) Section 245-3(a)(7), after September 30, 2008, and prior to July 1, 2009:
>
> (A) 2.0 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;
>
> (B) 0.5 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the trauma system special fund established pursuant to section 321-22.5;
>
> (C) 0.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the community health centers special fund established pursuant to section 321-1.65; and
>
> (D) 0.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the emergency medical services special fund established pursuant to section 321-234;
>
> (4) Section 245-3(a)(8), after June 30, 2009, and prior to July 1, 2013:
>
> (A) 2.0 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;
>
> (B) 0.75 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the trauma system special fund established pursuant to section 321-22.5;

(C) 0.75 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the community health centers special fund established pursuant to section 321-1.65; and

(D) 0.5 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the emergency medical services special fund established pursuant to section 321-234;

(5) Section 245-3(a)(11), after June 30, 2013, and prior to July 1, 2015:

(A) 2.0 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;

(B) 1.5 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the trauma system special fund established pursuant to section 321-22.5;

(C) 1.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the community health centers special fund established pursuant to section 321-1.65; and

(D) 1.25 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the emergency medical services special fund established pursuant to section 321-234; and

(6) Section 245-3(a)(11), after June 30, 2015, and thereafter:

(A) 2.0 cents per cigarette shall be deposited to the credit of the Hawaii cancer research special fund, established pursuant to section 304A-2168, for research and operating expenses and for capital expenditures;

(B) 1.125 cents per cigarette, but not more than $7,400,000 in a fiscal year, shall be deposited to the credit of the trauma system special fund established pursuant to section 321-22.5;

(C) 1.25 cents per cigarette, but not more than $8,800,000 in a fiscal year, shall be deposited to the credit of the community health centers special fund established pursuant to section 321-1.65; and

(D) 1.25 cents per cigarette, but not more than $8,800,000 in a fiscal year, shall be deposited to the credit of the emergency medical services special fund established pursuant to section 321-234.

The department shall provide an annual accounting of these dispositions to the legislature.

The allocation of EMS special funds directed by Act 158, SLH 2004, was based on a study conducted by the department in 2001 that prioritized the areas that additional ambulance services were needed through-out the state. The priority areas were metropolitan Honolulu, Waianae/Nanakuli, and Kaaawa/Kahaluu on the island of Oahu; Wailea on the island of Maui; and Ocean View Estates on the island of Hawaii. These areas were specifically targeted for enhanced services to be paid for from the new EMS special fund.

Act 158, SLH 2004, also recognized the shortage of paramedics and need for training of emergency medical personnel by allocating funding for enhanced paramedic training on the neighbor islands. The allocation of funds was based upon funding availability and the resources available for development and training.

The department continues to maintain and operate the statewide EMS system including the enhancements added pursuant to Act 158, SLH 2004, through its contracted providers.

Receipts

In FY 2025, revenue collected from the five dollars per vehicle registration fee was deposited into the EMS special fund. The EMS special fund revenues from vehicle registration fees (source code 0018) in FY 2025 were $6,501,419.21.

In FY 2025, revenue collected from 1.25 cents per cigarette sold pursuant to section 245-15, HRS, was deposited into the EMS special fund. The EMS special fund revenues from cigarette sales (source code 0012) in FY 2025 were $4,867,878.70.

The EMS special fund revenues from the investment pool account (source code 0288) in FY 2025 were $481,927.81.

The EMS special fund revenues (total) in FY 2025 were $11,851,225.72.

Expenditures

Expenditures for FY 2025 were $14,796,493.00.

Encumbrances

The remaining encumbrances, as of December 30, 2025, are $201,758.02.

Legislative Clarification: Scope of Emergency Medical Services Special Fund

The Emergency Medical Services special fund, as established under section 321-234, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is comprised solely of revenues expressly authorized in statute, including vehicle registration fees, designated cigarette tax revenues, interest and investment earnings, legislative appropriations, and grants, donations, or contributions.

The EMS special fund does not include, and has never included, revenues generated from emergency medical services transport billing, user fees, or third-party reimbursements**,** including payments from Medicare, Medicaid, private insurers, or self-pay patients. The special fund also does not include licensure or other fees collected by Department of Health (DOH), Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Branch (EMSIPSB).

EMS transport billing revenues, licensing, and educational funding sources are collected and deposited into the State General Fund. For FY2025 total collected revenues deposited into the State Gender Fund by EMS was $29,666,803.67. These revenues are currently not considered for inclusion into the EMS special fund.